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ABSTRACT

The way that affirmative action fits into the faculty appointment process at Stanford University and the University of California at Berkeley was studied, based on 50 faculty interviews and supporting documentation. Traditions of governance at the universities determined the responses to faculty affirmative action. At Stanford University, affirmative action was promoted by a team of administrators, the president, provost, and vice provost. Most of their methods focused on greater attention to process and on systematization of hiring and promotion procedures. A Faculty Affirmative Action Fund was established to encourage faculty in departments to be entrepreneurial in seeking and attracting candidates; the reward was an extra faculty slot for the department. At Berkeley, the leadership included faculty who were formally named to administrative positions and who inadvertently moved into positions of influence. A new vice chancellor, along with other influential faculty members, helped create programs and policies that supported affirmative action. This leadership style, which was based on the efforts of a relatively small group of people, can be termed "oligarchic." (SW)

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# GOVERNANCE STYLES: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

Traditions of governance at two west coast universities have determined the institutions' responses to faculty affirmative action. Those styles, labeled "administrative teamwork" and "oligarchic leadership," are illustrated for Stanford University and the University of California at Berkeley.

# Governance Styles: Affirmative Action At Two Universities

## Introduction

Affirmative action was born in the 1960s, and has been trying to come of age ever since. The forces involved--judicial, legislative, ethical, and economic--comprise a compelling mandate for the inclusion of previously underrepresented groups into all areas of the academic community. How particular institutions have responded to this affirmative mandate depends on many factors, among them institutional tradition, the attitudes of interested constituencies, geographical location, and prevailing styles of administration and governance.

The present study was designed to understand how affirmative action fits into the faculty appointment process at two selective, west coast universities. The two universities, Stanford and the University of California at Berkeley, share a commitment to academic excellence and serve an essentially similar clientele. The study showed that both institutions are trying to respond to the affirmative action imperative. It also showed that there were subtle differences in that response, and that these differences could be related to the styles of governance at each school. We have labeled those styles "administrative teamwork" and "oligarchic leadership." This paper describes each and offers in conclusion a few general comments.

## The Study

Fifty interviews were conducted among faculty at two universities, Stanford and Berkeley. Some of the faculty serve or have served in the central administration, some are or were department heads; others were identified simply as members of the community who are seasoned observers and influencers of change. Several departments were selected in advance, representing a variety of disciplinary fields, and faculty from these departments at each institution were interviewed. Supporting documentary material was collected also--memos, articles, policy statements, and the like--but for the most part, it is the faculty members themselves whose observations, attitudes, and beliefs comprise the bulk of the evidence. There is, of course, some danger in presenting a portrait painted by its sitters. Reliance on the subjective impressions of a limited number of people may lead to assumptions that are not wholly precise. However, these attitudes and beliefs make up the institutional culture, so these people deserve to be heard and believe they should be: they tend to feel and to advertise that they are the university.

Administrative Teamwork

At Stanford, the onset of the 1970s marked a change in the central administration. The Provost was appointed to the presidency and a new Provost was named. Both were long-standing members of the community, and both shared similar values that supported faculty affirmative action. As one person said, " They represented a certain outlook toward the institution that was appropriate for those times, and surrounded themselves with people who would be interested in affirmative action ." In 1971, for example, the position of Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs was created to help guide the University's affirmative action efforts. This team of three--President, Provost and Vice Provost--aided on many occasions by some deans and by the University's budget officer--made an explicit decision to promote faculty affirmative action, and agreed what should be done. This occurred before the issuance in 1972 of the federal Executive Order that outlined affirmative action requirements for colleges and universities. The institution's posture was reflected in the words of the Vice Provost, " We wanted to move aggressively while other institutions were figuring out what to do. My goal was to beat off the feds by being better. I didn't want to have a system where people felt compelled."

This team shared the sense that they could lead the faculty. The Provost recalls his strategy: "We tried to create a set of circumstances, incentives, that people would find it hard to argue with." Few of their methods were particularly unusual--most focused on greater attention to process and on systematization of hiring and promotion procedures--though the University may have been the first to create an incentive fund targeted specifically for affirmative action appointments. A Faculty Affirmative Action Fund was established to encourage faculty in departments to be entrepreneurial in seeking and attracting candidates; their reward, in a time of fiscal stringency, was an extra faculty slot for the department. On the whole, the Fund was successful; its resources have been in continuous use since its inception.

The faculty were, in general, responsive to this administrative leadership. Some say the faculty as a whole was not particularly impelled by the movement for affirmative action, any more than faculty typically are impelled to embrace any internal change transcending departmental concerns. But faculties do respond to enlightened pressure, and indirect pressure was directed carefully, as one department head recalled: "It became clear that if we wanted to hire somebody, it would be easier...if it turned out to be a woman or minority. There would be additional funds. That's a kind of pressure...but more a flexibility." One dean remarked,

> It's better to work on an incentive basis--much more carrot than stick, if you can figure out what the carrots are. What distinguishes Stanford's program from others is

that there have been carrots....It made a real difference, no question.

Effort, attention, and incentives characterized Stanford's approach to faculty affirmative action in the early 1970s. A group of senior administrators, all respected within the campus community, was able to guide the institution toward a reasonably consistent approach to the issue. Though their efforts probably appear more systematic in retrospect than seemed the case at the time, the coherence of this administrative team helped mold an institutional attitude whose residue persists.

Oligarchic Leadership

In those early years of the 1970s, both Berkeley and the University of California system administration adopted a defensive, compliance-based posture toward affirmative action. Pressed by demands from federal agencies and politically active groups, the Berkeley administration was accused by many of being more concerned with form than with substance. Yet the political climate that elicited such caution on the part of the administration helped build a constituency for affirmative action among the faculty. As one professor said, "faculty attitudes changed...long before any regulatory machinery was in place. It took only a few years at the decentralized level. People didn't give up their prejudices, but they became illegitimate very quickly."

In 1973, the Academic Senate developed its own Affirmative Action Program For The Berkeley Faculty, reflecting what was called in the document "a substantial and increasing consensus of faculty opinion." A new Vice Chancellor was appointed in 1974, and Berkeley's various efforts around the affirmative action issue coalesced to become a more meaningful and integral part of the Berkeley community.

The Vice Chancellor drew together and promulgated the support for affirmative action that already existed. He, along with other influential faculty members, helped create programs and policies that supported affirmative action. Thus a relatively small group of people, most of whom were senior faculty members, some of whom were also administrators, formed an ad hoc leadership group.

It may be significant that the initiative for affirmative action at Stanford was taken by administrators--Stanford did not establish an Academic Senate until 1967. At Berkeley, however, the Senate enjoys a long tradition. It acts independently of the administration in all areas concerned with faculty affairs, so it is logical that the affirmative action impulse should arise from the faculty. As a current Provost said:

> If you had to state who has greater weight either the Academic Senate or the administration on a matter involving faculty, you'd have to say it's the Senate...because the Senate has been given this authority

traditionally, and they exercise it. And they exercise it very well.

Most faculty members at Berkeley believe that the Senate works for affirmative action, especially the committee that makes judgments about faculty appointments. Said one member of this committee:

> ... In earlier years the Committee may have thought the administration was taking care of affirmative action, but I think now the Committee sees it as an independent responsibility....I do think the fact that people know the Committee is concerned about this issue tends to ensure that the proper steps will be followed.

At Berkeley, as at other universities, appointment decisions are largely decentralized. The oligarchic leadership for affirmative action helped establish University-wide policies and ensured that those academic units and committees headed by such people did accomplish some affirmative objectives. Other areas reflected the more conservative attitudes held by their department heads. The Senate, more than the administration, has helped implement what consistency exists. Individual administrators act also as advocates within the areas of their purview. Some more recent administrative appointments have helped spread among academic units further attention to affirmative issues.

Summary

We have sketched two styles of response to affirmative action, two forms of leadership. Many authors have written about the role of university leadership: some say that presidential initiative especially is of critical importance (e.g., Dodds 1962, Veysey 1965); others disagree about the extent of the president's ability to lead an institution (Cohen and March 1974, Besse 1973, Pfeffer 1981). We suggest that institutions have different traditions, different governance patterns that produce different forms of leadership, and the president may or may not be included in these. At Stanford, the president played a leading, though not a sole, part in guiding the community toward affirmative action goals. At Berkeley, the leadership included faculty who were formally named to administrative positions and who inadvertently moved into positions of influence.

Leadership may also shift according to the issue involved. Affirmative action presents an interesting case because it represents a conflict of values: on the one hand departmental autonomy, on the other, broader notions of equity and social justice. How attitudes coalesce around this kind of potential value conflict reveals much about institutional governance styles and networks of influence within the University.

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